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**Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their
implications for international peace, security and
development**

The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

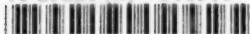
**Letter dated 24 February 2010 from the Permanent
Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed
to the Secretary-General**

The Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan has circulated an appalling letter, contained in document A/64/658-S/2010/78 of 8 February 2010, under agenda items 14 and 18 of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly for the sole purpose of spreading a new wave of hate propaganda against the Republic of Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh.

This letter has been designed by the Azerbaijani side to hit the target of discrediting Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh during the General Assembly's present work by misleading the international community through impressive falsifications and defamatory facts and figures. The cynicism of the way it is done is frightening in its simplicity. I regret the fact that Azerbaijan does not cease playing the game of getting into the image of victim of so-called "Armenian aggression".

The events of Khodjalu reflected in the above-mentioned document is the pinnacle of the Azeri allegations. I would comment on this by referring to the interview of the President of Azerbaijan, Aiaz Mutalibov, with Czech journalist Dana Mazalova, published in April 1992. The President of Azerbaijan stated that the militia of the Azerbaijani National Front actively obstructed and actually prevented the evacuation of the local civilian population from the military operation zone through the mountain passages specifically left open by the Karabagh Armenians. The hope and intention of the Azerbaijani opposition was to utilize civilian losses of such a magnitude to instigate a popular uprising against the Baku regime and seize the reins of power.

In a witness account brought by the Helsinki Watch report of September 1992, an Azerbaijani woman is quoted as confirming that Armenians had notified the



Azerbaijani civilian population to leave the town with white flags raised. In fact, the Azerbaijani militia shot those who attempted to flee.

To further clarify the issue let me note that the international community has already witnessed and confirmed the countless atrocities of the Azerbaijani Government towards the defenceless Armenian population.

As a response to a peaceful demand of the Nagorno Karabagh people to exercise its right to self-determination, the Azeri authorities organized an armed mob, which launched pogroms against Armenians living in the Azeri city of Sumgait in 1988. These massacres were the first acts of mass killings on the territory of the Soviet Union, as witnessed by the criminal proceedings launched by the Soviet authorities. Immediately after declaring its independence, Azerbaijan freed the accused murderers and openly saluted them as national heroes through the mass media.

The Helsinki Watch report of the time testifies that "these events were intended to exacerbate the fear and horror of ethnic Armenians in the other parts of Azerbaijan". Massacres in Ganja, Baku and other cities between 1988 and 1991 were far more barbaric and massive, leading to the deportation and ethnic cleansing of about half a million Armenians.

These atrocities were followed by unprecedented Azeri military offensives and operations designed to implement a military solution by annihilating the Nagorno Karabagh population. It has to be finally and forever clarified that it was Azerbaijan which started an armed aggression against Nagorno Karabagh.

Armenia is convinced that by far the better solution would be the restoration of the fundamental and lawful rights of Armenians living in Nagorno Karabagh by addressing their inalienable right to self-determination.

I should be grateful to you if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 14 and 18, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Garen Nazarian**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative